

## GUIDELINES FOR REQUESTING AN EXCEPTION FOR SCHOOL BUS SERVICE

### **Parent or Guardian:**

A parent or guardian may request an exception to the transportation policy to allow his or her child to ride a school bus. Two conditions must exist: (1) there must be available seating on the bus; and, (2) there must be an acceptable walking route to the existing bus stop. Exceptions will be granted for one destination only, five days per week.

For parents with dual custodial arrangements, transportation for the alternating residence within the school boundary may be granted. An exception for a continuous schedule may be granted on an annual basis. A transportation exception for an intermittent schedule may be granted according to the schedule provided to the school by the enrolling parent. It is the enrolling parent's responsibility to provide the custodial schedule to the school. If the student is not able to remember his/her schedule on a day to day basis, the school staff should provide assistance to the student. The Office of Transportation Services is not responsible for ensuring that the student follows his/her schedule.

A parent should identify the requested school, route number, stop location, student ID#, and walking route to be used by his or her child. If the Office of Transportation Services determines that there is no acceptable walking path to the requested bus stop, a parent must submit a Parental Acknowledgment of Voluntary Suspension of FCPS Guidelines before bus service will be approved (See Attachment C). In doing so, the parent accepts responsibility to supervise and transport the student to or from the bus stop. This includes the responsibility to make alternate arrangements for meeting and supervising the student when the bus is delayed or when the parent cannot be present at the time the student is returned to the bus stop.

A copy of existing bus routes is available at each school for review. When the parent or guardian has completed the appropriate exception form(s), the form(s) should be submitted for review to the school. The school will forward it to the transportation office serving the school pyramid.

- Area 1 Office - 8101 Lorton Road, Lorton, VA 22079 Fax: 703-690-8501  
Edison, Hayfield, Lewis, Mt Vernon, South County, West  
Potomac
- Area 2 Office - 8101 Lorton Road, Lorton, VA 22079 Fax: 703-690-0221  
Annandale, Falls Church, Lake Braddock, Justice, West Springfield, Woodson
- Area 3 Office - 4641 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly, VA 20151 Fax: 703-249-7097  
Centreville, Chantilly, Fairfax, Oakton, Robinson, Westfield
- Area 4 Office - 4641 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly, VA 20151 Fax: 703-249-7197  
Herndon, Langley, Marshall, Madison, McLean, South Lakes

Requests for an exception for transportation may be submitted beginning July 1. A new request must be submitted each school year and will be considered on a first-come, first-serve basis. The Office of Transportation Services will respond as soon as it is practical to do so but may need to delay the approval or denial of requests until routes and eligible riders are verified during the month of September. A response should not be expected before October 1.

### **Transportation Services:**

Transportation staff members will review each request received to determine if seating is available, if the proposed walking route to the bus stop satisfies transportation standards, and if any exception requests are properly justified. When these conditions exist, the transportation coordinator will recommend approval. If there are any questions regarding the appropriateness of the walking route, the request will be forwarded to the Office of Safety and Security for further review. If seating is not available or other conditions are not satisfied, the transportation coordinator will not recommend approval and will forward the request directly to the assistant superintendent for the Department of Facilities and Transportation Services.

### **Office of Safety and Security:**

When requested by the Office of Transportation Services, the Office of Safety and Security will review the specific walking route to the bus stop for unusual hazards. The request will then be forwarded to the assistant superintendent for the Department of Facilities and Transportation Services.

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## **Assistant Superintendent for Facilities and Transportation Services:**

The designee for the Division Superintendent will approve or disapprove all requests. If approved, a copy of the request form will be sent to the parent or guardian and to the base school. A temporary bus pass will then be issued to the student from the base school. The student will be required to display the pass at the request of the school bus driver or other school staff member.

## **The Process for Rescinding an Exception for School Bus Service :**

An exception to ride may be rescinded by the Division Superintendent, or his or her designee, for the following reasons: seating on the bus is required for eligible students, existing bus stop is eliminated, walking route or bus stop becomes unsafe, or parent and/or child fails to comply with transportation services rules or with terms of the exception to ride request as initially approved.

If rescinding an exception to ride becomes necessary, more recent requests will generally be rescinded before older ones, although other factors, such as safety and hardship, may be taken into account. The parent or guardian of the affected child will be notified by the school of the effective date of any change.